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FEBRUARY, 1913

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# The Open Court

A MONTHLY MAGAZINE

Devoted to the Science of Religion, the Religion of Science, and the  
Extension of the Religious Parliament Idea

Founded by EDWARD C. HEGELER



LAO-TZE.

From a statuette in the Musée Guimet.

The Open Court Publishing Company  
CHICAGO

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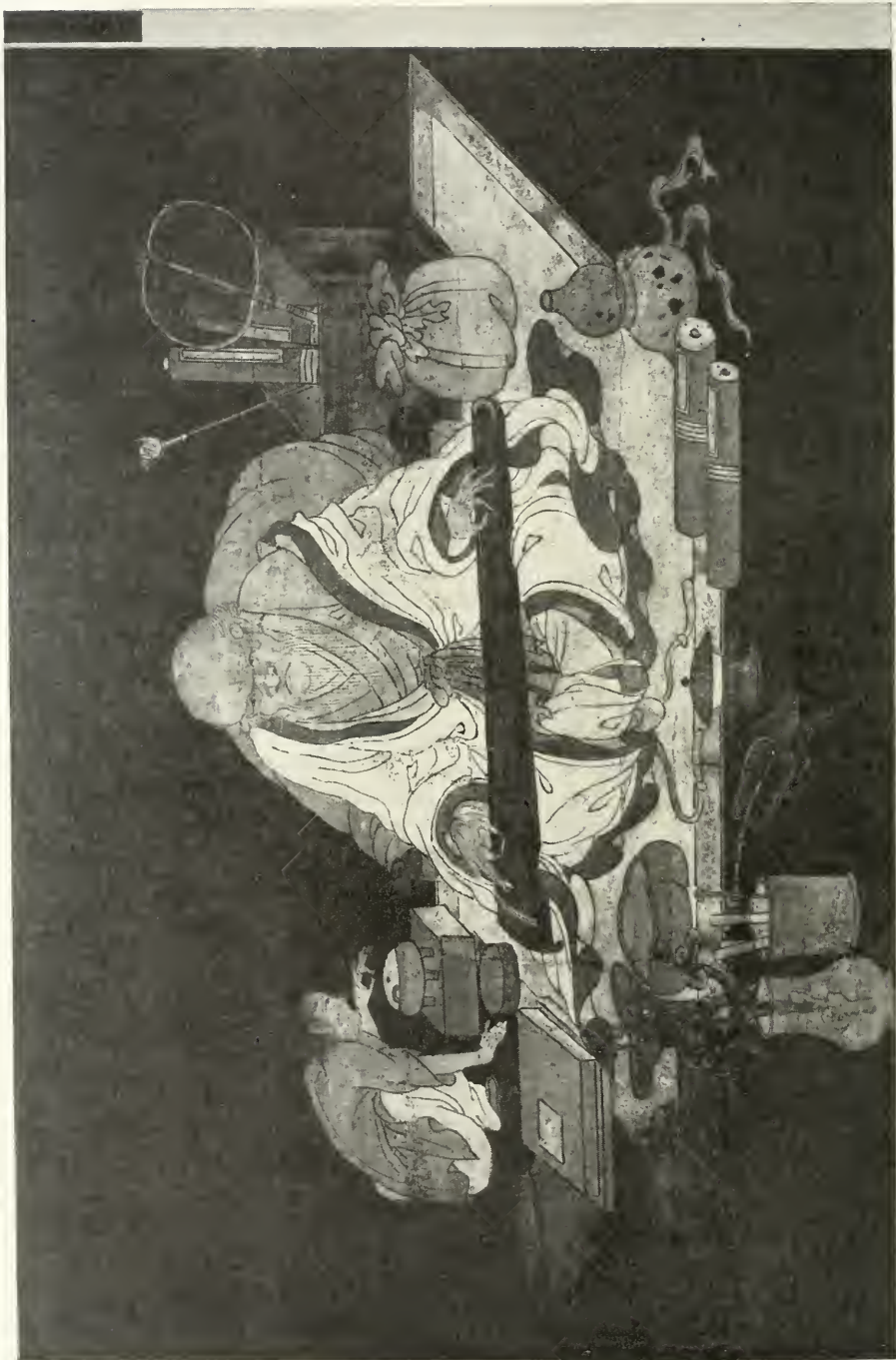
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LAO-TZE BY CHOU FANG. (From the original in the collection of Charles L. Freer of Detroit.)  
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## ALBANIA.

BY THE EDITOR.

WAR clouds have been hanging over Europe and the storm center is the Balkan peninsula. The most active factors are the three small states of Servia, Bulgaria and Montenegro. They are assisted by Greece and their aim is the downfall of Constantinople, which would mean the expulsion of the Turks from Europe. The two powers of the European concert most interested are Austria and Russia, the former supported by Germany and Italy, the latter by France and England. The position of Turkey would be hopeless in the face of the victorious march of the allied Balkan states toward Constantinople if the European concert would allow Constantinople to fall into their hands. But there is another feature in the present state of things which renders the crisis more complicated. It is the importance of Albania, the mountainous district between Montenegro and Greece stretching along the western coast of the Balkan peninsula for about 180 miles, but extending inland nowhere more than 100 miles and only 30 miles in its southern portion.

The allied states are determined to divide Albania among themselves and actually began to invade the country. But here Austria interfered, for having taken possession of the Dalmatian coast, Herzegovina and Bosnia, it extends its empire to the northern frontier of Albania, and is bound not to let this country fall into other hands. Thus Austria stands for the independence of Albania and is willing to wage war in her defence. In this way Albania has suddenly burst into a prominence it never before possessed, and all the world is interested to know what kind of a country it is and what kind of people the Albanians may be.

The main sources of our knowledge of Albania are J. Cam Hobhouse (Lord Broughton), Sir Henry Holland, the Rev. T. S. Hughes, Mrs. Mary A. Walker, Col. Leake, Dr. J. G. von Hahn, Theodor A. Ippen, Karl Steinmetz, Dr. Franz Baron Nopcsa, Dr. Erich Liebert, Dr. Träger, Dr. Schultz, Dr. A. Wirth und Dr. Ernst Jäckh. Dr. Jäckh's book, *Im türkischen Kriegslager durch Albanien* (1911), though antiquated with respect to the author's great expectations that Turkey will prove a rising power (for he is a decided Turkophil), has been to us the most important source of information.



RAPIDS OF THE VARDAR NEAR DEMIRKAPU.

Our illustrations are based on photographs taken by different people and published in this book.

Albania has rightly been called the darkest part of Europe. Its interior is almost as unknown as the darkest part of Central Africa. The best maps are those made by the Austrian general staff, and even these maps only follow certain portions along the most accessible valleys. They leave large portions blank, or only indicate what kind of a country the cartographers thought it might be. The reason is that very few travelers have dared to penetrate into the



interior, for the inhabitants do not possess the usual customs of civilized countries. Most of the people are robbers and brigands, and murder is not considered a crime. The stranger has no right to protection unless he is received at the hearth, according to the usages of primitive savages. He is an outlaw if found on the road, and may be shot down from ambush without rousing the authorities to investigate the case.

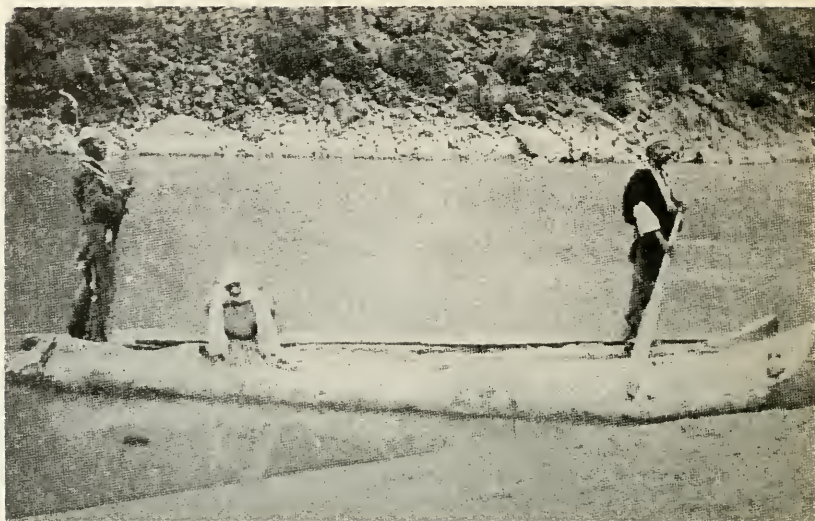
The southern part of the country is the ancient Epirus, and the only time it ever played an important part in history was when Pyrrhus led his troops against Rome and threatened its very existence in a ferocious and formidable attack, which however lacked insistence and after a great display of valor ended in a lamentable failure.

Albania received its name in the fifteenth century when several more northerly tribes combined with Epirus into one country marked by a similarity in race, language and customs. The reason it has never influenced the world, and has never grown into a united state is because its inhabitants have always been too lawless and independent to come to an agreement after the fashion of a civilized nation. Each person feels bound to preserve the traditional customs of their forebears, and their supreme rule is not to recognize any authority above themselves. Every man takes the law in his own hands and deems it his privilege to rob and pillage wherever he can do so with impunity; every one is inseparable from his weapons, and no man would venture on a journey or even on the public high road without his gun. The most ancient habits of primitive Europe are here preserved and the influence of progress since the days of King Pyrrhus is practically nil.

Epirus and its descendant Albania have been repeatedly subdued, but their submission has always been merely nominal. Macedonia has succeeded in having its sovereignty recognized, but the Macedonian government could not be established in the mountainous regions of Albania. When Cæsar landed in Dyrrhachium<sup>1</sup> he induced the people to take up arms against Pompey and the inhabitants of Epirus recognized the Roman emperor, but no Roman governor dared to levy taxes or succeeded in enforcing Roman law in the interior of the country, and this remained true after the division of the empire. The Greek emperors considered Albania a Greek province, but the Albanians remained as ferocious and uncivilized as before.

When the Greek empire broke down from the assaults of the

<sup>1</sup> The modern Durazzo.



ALBANIAN CANOE (A HOLLOWED TREE).



ALBANIAN "TCHERK."

A ferry constructed of inflated goat-skins and wicker.

Turks under Mohammed II there was a change in the nominal ownership of Albania but no change of conditions. Of the many wars between the Turks and the Albanians the most celebrated was the one in which the Albanians were led by George Castriota, called Scanderbeg by the Turks. This patriot became the national hero, and he repulsed the victorious Mohammedans several times when they dared to enter Albania. He was the son of an Albanian chieftain and a Servian princess, and on account of his father's prominence had been sent to the court of Constantinople where he received



ON THE WARPATH.

a Mohammedan education. When he returned to his home his Albanian patriotism was aroused and the rest of his life was devoted to a fierce warfare against the sultan, lasting from 1443 to 1467 when he succumbed to a severe attack of malaria. The Albanians lost in him a chief who had frequently led them to victory, and after his death the Turks regained a footing in the country. In a peace concluded at Venice in 1478 the sovereignty of Turkey over Albania was recognized although never permanently established. Revolts were frequent and the only thing which caused a pleasant relation was Turkey's demand for adventurous soldiers.



The Turks recruited their armies in Albania with success, for the Albanians were always ready for a brawl and eager for spoils and could easily be induced to fight for any cause against any country where spoils could be expected.

Through the friendly relation between the quasi-conquerors, the Turks, and the partially subjected Albanians, the Mohammedan religion took a firm root in the country, but the Islam of the Albanians is by no means the orthodox religion of Mohammed. Christianity was not suppressed; on the contrary it was retained, and the two confessions, the Greek and the Roman churches, hate each other far more than they hate the Mohammedans. Thus it happens that the religious conditions in Albania are a regular *melée*. The



THE SERVIAN CHURCH, THE MOHAMMEDAN MOSQUE, AND THE CITADEL OF PRIZREN.

men of the family mostly go to the mosques while the women attend church either according to the Greek or Latin ritual. There is no quarrel on account of religion except between the Greeks and the Latins.

In its original and main stock the Albanian race is most probably the purest remnant of the ancestors of the Greeks. Greek traditions refer with great reverence to the sacred oak and the oracle of Dodona, and so the ancient Epirotes must have been cousins to the Macedonians, the Thracians, the Illyrians and the Pelasgi of ancient Greece. The latter were probably their nearest kin. The present language seems to preserve some traces of pre-Hellenic speech, but it has been influenced successively by Greek, Roman, Slavic (Servian and Bulgarian) and Turkish ingredients.

The eleventh edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica* contains the following account of the Albanian language:

"Albanian is particularly interesting as the only surviving representative of the so-called Thracian-Illyrian group of languages which formed the primitive speech of the peninsula. It has afforded an attractive study to philologists, amongst whom may be mentioned Malte-Brun, Leake, Xylander, Hahn, Miklosich and G. Meyer. The analysis of the language presents great difficulties, as, owing to the



A MOHAMMEDAN COUPLE OF SHIOLA SYPER.

absence of literary monuments, no certainty can be arrived at with regard to its earlier forms and later development. The groundwork, so far as it can be ascertained, and grammar are Indo-European, but a large number of words have been borrowed from the Latin or Italian and Greek, and it is not always easy to decide whether the mutilated and curtailed forms now in use represent adopted words or belong to the original vocabulary. There is also a considerable mixture of Turkish and Slavonic words. Notwithstanding certain points of resemblance in structure and phonetics, Albanian is en-



tirely distinct from the neighboring languages; in its relation to early Latin and Greek it may be regarded as a coordinate member of the Aryan stock. It possesses seven vowels; among the consonants are the aspirated *d* and *t* as in Greek, and many other sounds such as *b*, *d*, *sh*, *zh* (French *j*), and hard *g*, which are wanting in Greek but exist in the Slavonic languages. There are three declensions, each with a definite and indefinite form; the genitive, dative and ablative are usually represented by a single termination; the



MALSIA WOMEN WITH SPINDLE AND PITCHER.

vocative is formed by a final *o* as *memmo* from *memme*, 'mother.' The neuter gender is absent. There are two conjugations; the passive formation, now wanting in most European languages, has been retained as in Greek; thus *kerko-iy*, 'I seek,' forms *kerko-n-cm*, 'I am sought.' The infinitive is not found; as in Greek, Roumanian and Bulgarian, it is replaced by the subjunctive with a particle. The two auxiliary verbs are *kām*, 'I have,' and *yām*, 'I am.' An interesting and characteristic feature of the language is the definite article, which is attached to the end of the word: e. g., *mik* ('friend,'

*amicus*), *mik-u* ('the friend'); *kien* ('dog'), *kien-i*; *Shkumb*, *Shkumb-i*. The suffix article likewise appears in Roumanian and Bulgarian, but in no other Latin or Slavonic language; it is in each case a form of the demonstrative pronoun. Another remarkable analogy between the Albanian and neighboring languages is the formation of the future; the Albanian *do* (3d person singular of *dova*, 'I will'), like the Greek  $\theta\alpha$ , is prefixed without change to all persons of the verb; a similar usage in Servian and Bulgarian, as well as in Roumanian (especially the Macedonian dialect), is pecu-



A MOHAMMEDAN MOUNTAIN GIRL OF ALBANIA.

liar to these languages in the Latin and Slavonic groups. These and other points of similarity, possibly only accidental, have led to the conjecture that the primitive Illyrian language may have exerted some kind of an influence on the other idioms of the peninsula. In the absence of literary culture the Albanian dialects, as might have been expected, are widely divergent; the limits of the two principal dialects correspond with the racial boundaries of the Ghegs and the Tosks, who understand each other with difficulty; the Albanians in Greece and Italy have also separate dialects. In writing Albanian

the Latin character is employed by the Ghegs, the Greek by the Tosks; neither alphabet suffices to represent the manifold sounds of the language, and various supplementary letters or distinguishing signs are necessary. In the use of these no uniform system has yet been adopted. An alphabet of 52 letters, some presenting ancient Phenician and Cretan forms, was found by Hahn in partial use at Elbassan and Tirana; its antiquity however has not been established.



AN ALBANIAN CATHOLIC WOMAN OF SHKODRA.

The Tosks generally use the Greek language for written communications. The native folklore and poetry of the Albanians can scarcely compare with that of the neighboring nations in originality and beauty. The earliest printed works in Albania are those of the Catholic missionaries. The most noteworthy Albanian writer is Girolamo di Rada (died 1815), a poet, philologist and collector of folklore."

The *Encyclopædia Britannica* describes the race thus:



"The native Albanian is of middle stature ; his face is oval, with high cheek-bones ; his neck long ; his chest full and broad. His air is erect and majestic to a degree which never fails to strike the traveler. He holds in utter contempt that dissimulation which is characteristic of the Greek, and, unlike the Turk, he is gay, lively, and active. Averse, however, to regular industry, his whole delight is in arms and plunder. He goes constantly armed ; and there are few Albanians who have not, in the prime of their life, belonged to some of the numerous bands of robbers who infest the mountains of their native country, of Thessaly, and of Macedonia. This occupa-



ALBANIANS IN THEIR TYPICAL NATIONAL COSTUME.

tion carries with it no disgrace : it is common for the Albanian to mention circumstances which occurred 'when he was a robber.'

"This fierce and haughty race display a greater degree of contempt for the female sex than is usual even among the most barbarous nations. The females are literally regarded as inferior animals, and treated accordingly ; but in the country districts they are not confined or veiled, as is customary in Mohammedan countries.

"The national costume of the Albanians is handsome in appearance, and bears some resemblance to the Highland dress. It consists of a cotton shirt ; a white woolen *fustanella* or kilt, which reaches to the knees ; a jacket ; a sash round the waist, in which pistols and a

yataghan are commonly carried; colored leggings; sandals; and a red cap, round which some twist a shawl or scarf.

"The chiefs and wealthy Albanians generally wear a jacket and vest of velvet, richly embroidered with gold, and metal greaves over their leggings which are usually made of fine scarlet cloth.

"The poorer classes, though picturesque in appearance, are extremely dirty in their habits, and seldom change their clothes. As



DISTINGUISHED ALBANIANS OF THE HOTTI TRIBE.

a protection from the weather, every Albanian has a *capote*, or rough shaggy mantle with a hood attached, and usually made of horse-hair stuff or coarse woollen cloth.

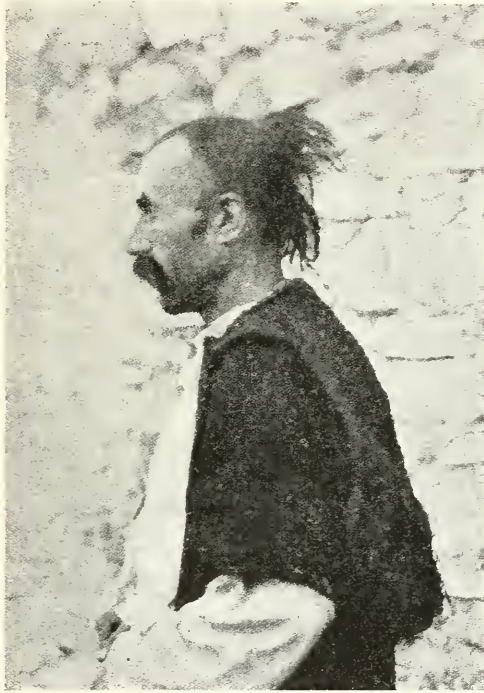
"The dress of the females is more various, and often fantastical. A singular custom prevails among the girls of stringing together the pieces of money which they have collected for their portion, and wearing them upon their heads. Some of them have their hair hang-



ing down in braids to a great length, loaded with this species of ornament."

One feature in the appearance of the Albanians which is frequently remarked by travelers is the tuft of hair on top of the head. There is a saying that the strong development of the hair on the crown is an indication of a bad or headstrong boy, and if there is any truth in this idea it decidedly shows in the Albanian race.

The Albanians have played an important part in the develop-



AN ALBANIAN OF KOMANA IN MALISIA.

Showing the typical tuft (*percen*) on the crown of the head.

ment of the destiny of Turkey. Being excitable and energetic they rush into action without plan or foresight. They are quickly moved by sentiment and yet when their resentment is aroused they do not forget. They are not opposed to the Turkish rule so long as it remains purely theoretical, but they resist all the methods by which a modern state maintains itself. They would not give up their arms, objected to paying taxes, would brook no police, would tolerate no censors, would not suffer their property to be entered at recorders'

offices and were even opposed to sending their children to school or to submit their quarrels to court. The old system of taking the law in their own hands, of stealing the cattle of others, of slaying the wayfarer, of blood brotherhood and blood revenge, is considered part of the inalienable right of the country; and it has been estimated that 24% of the entire male population on the average—in some parts a little less but in many considerably more, up to 40%—is ex-



ALBANIANS OF KIRI.



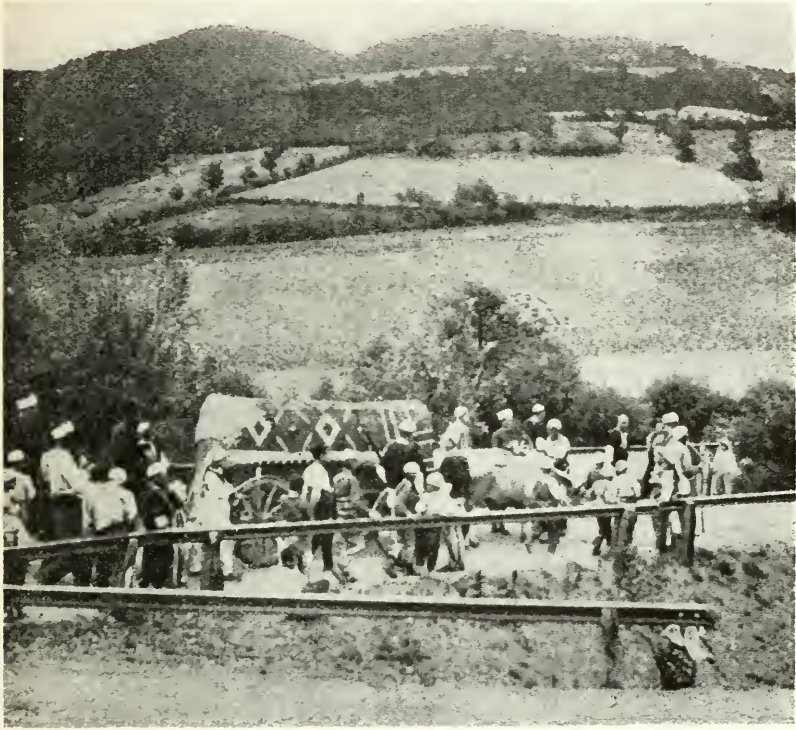
A VIRGIN OF THE HOTTI TRIBE

terminated by assassination, and no authority has so far succeeded in stopping this custom.

Child-betrothals are a frequent source of family feuds. Children are promised in marriage by the parents sometimes while still in the cradle, and if a girl refuses to fulfil the contract after she is grown, she cannot withdraw without provoking intense hostility between her whole family and that of the youth to whom she was betrothed. This can be satisfied only by the shedding of blood, and

the privilege of punishing her male relatives by assassination is considered quite as much a sacred duty as blood revenge.

The girl can escape this fate only by the formal declaration that she will never marry, and then by a special ceremony she turns a kind of worldly nun and is henceforward not considered a woman but a man. She dresses in man's clothes, takes up arms and no longer enjoys the woman's privilege of having her life spared in



A BRIDAL PROCESSION.

The cart contains the dowry, and the bride walks at its side.

family feuds. Now she may indulge in robbery in which case she is called *tsupp-dashia*, "robber-buck." She is called *virjin*, a word probably derived from the Latin *virgo* and may etymologically be the same as the English "virgin." She is regarded by men with respect and awe and receives the title *vrend*, which is probably a contraction of the Latin *veneranda*. But all respect for her person would cease if she were to break her vow and assert her womanhood, and if she becomes a mother her life is forfeit.



Such customs as this are more powerful than religion. All take part in them, and the ties of blood-brotherhood frequently unite Catholic or Greek divines with Mohammedans—rarely Catholics with Greek Christians.

A memorable event in the recent history of Albania occurred during the Greek insurrection against Turkey. At the beginning of the war the excitable Albanians sympathized with Greece and showed



CATHOLIC ALBANIANS ATTENDING MASS FULLY ARMED.

unmistakable willingness to make common cause with her against Turkey, and their assistance would have ensured the success of the rebellion. But the Greeks were too haughty, looking with contempt on the wild descendants of the Epirotes. They remembered the petty guerilla warfare between their own people and the rough mountaineers and refused the Albanian overtures. On October 5, 1821, the Greeks captured the city of Tripolizza and indiscriminately massacred the whole Turkish garrison, among them 3000 Albanians.

This cruel act was never forgotten and established a bitter hostility between Albania and Greece.

In recent times the powers of Europe—who in truly folklore fashion have always figured in the Albanian imagination as “the seven kings of Europe”—in the Berlin treaty of 1878 assigned portions of Albania to the new Balkan states, especially Montenegro and Servia—and this aroused Albanian patriotism. A popular movement spread rapidly over the whole country, and a meeting was called where under great enthusiasm a solemn declaration was formulated in which they swore to defend their own country against the inroads



ALBANIAN PEASANT WOMAN IN SCUTARI.

of foreign aggressors. The powers were obliged to enforce their decree by a naval demonstration before Dulcigno, and the Albanians were compelled to yield. At that time the Albanian patriots sought support in Constantinople where Sultan Abdul Hamid for a time favored his Albanian bodyguard and helped the Albanians to print books in their own language. Soon afterwards however the enemies of Albania gained the sultan's ear and the patriots were exiled.

Through these persecutions the national spirit grew stronger. Albanian periodicals were started, among them *Spresa* (“Hope”), issued at Bucharest, and Sami Bey Frasheri published a book bearing the title, “What was Albania, What is Albania and What is



Albania to be?" He and his two brothers—all three Mohammedans—cooperated with the Greek and Roman Albanians and found vigorous assistance among Italian friends who were especially helpful inasmuch as the schools they established were non-sectarian and of a liberal tendency. Albania played an important part in the reform of the Ottoman empire. The Young Turks, who were well acquainted with the Albanian character, began their propaganda in Albania. Through their instigation a national meeting was called at Ferisovitch in July 1908, and here their demands were formulated

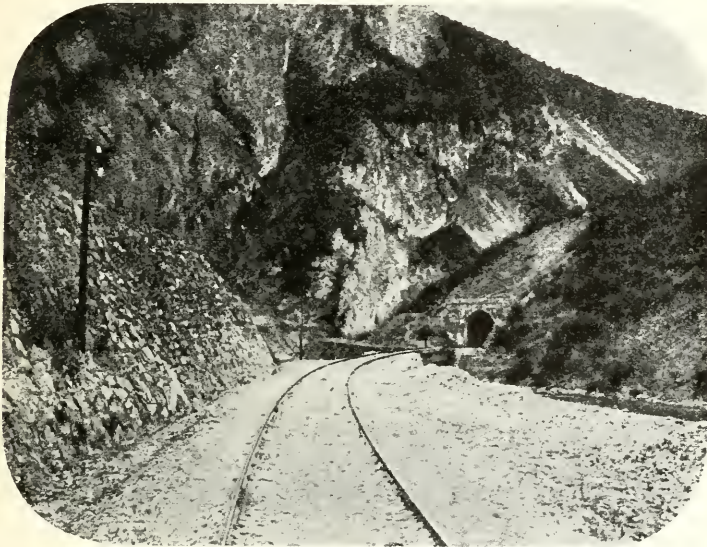


FRANCISCANS, JESUITS AND LAY PRIESTS ON THE SHORES OF LAKE SCUTARI.

in a declaration known as "the Bessa of Ferisovitch." *Bessa* is an Albanian word denoting a sacred contract, an oath to keep the peace, a solemn vow to stand by a promise, and such agreements are concluded between hostile families after a feud, or designate any defensive or offensive alliance.

The Young Turk movement was successful, but would scarcely have been so without the assistance of the Albanians, who were thus induced to take the initiative, for they furnished the most vigorous part of the Turkish army. When the Young Turk government was firmly established the leaders of the movement intended to reform

the whole empire on a modern basis as a civilized state. They met resistance in several portions of the empire, and especially in Arabia and Albania where the people were aroused to indignation. Turkish officers were sent there who demanded the disarmament of the people. Guns and other weapons were to be surrendered, taxes were to be levied and magistrates appointed. Instead of a free recruiting where volunteers might join the bodyguard of the sultan in Constantinople, a system of compulsory service was introduced, and the Albanians resented these innovations. This caused another commotion among the people, and again they met in Ferisovitch in the spring of 1910, where they swore to preserve their independence.



THE TUNNEL AT KATCHANIK.

The new Turkish government did not tolerate resistance. They sent an overwhelming detachment of troops equipped with all appliances of modern warfare, including Hotchkiss machine guns, and they succeeded in putting down the rebellion with great cruelty. Though the Albanians gained temporary advantage in their mountain fastnesses they could not make their resistance permanent, and their heavy losses forced them to submission, the result being the establishment of courts martial through which great numbers of Albanian chieftains were delivered to the gallows.

Having cut off a detachment of Turkish troops at Katchanik,

where the train that carried them into the mountains had passed through a tunnel, the Albanians gloried in their victory; but unfortunately a foreign railroad employee was in possession of a camera and the brave Albanians enjoyed having their pictures taken. However when the Turkish machine guns later got the best of the mountaineers and the hated Turkish rule was reestablished, these photographs served as evidence against the Albanian patriots so that many of them had to pay with their lives for their harmless vanity.

A complete and final victory of the Turkish government seemed assured and the task of civilizing Albania by rather barbarous methods seemed to be in the hands of the Young Turks. But something unexpected happened. Against the wishes of the great powers, Servia, Bulgaria and Montenegro began to wage against Turkey a war which has unexpectedly proved successful, and these new states have also decided to appropriate further portions of Albanian territory. Their invasion into Albania roused the indignation of Austria which, backed by Germany and Italy, looked upon it as a *casus belli*.

Encouraged by the support of Austria the Albanians proclaimed their independence at Durazzo on November 23, and are willing to defend it by a national uprising. Their political spokesman on this occasion was Ismail Kemal Bey. He is sixty years old and was in the service of the Ottoman empire as a Turkish governor, first when a young man in Constanza, a harbor town which has since been ceded to Roumania. Later on he was transferred to Tripoli, but being suspected of liberal tendencies, he was exiled under Abdul Hamid, after whose abdication he served in the Young Turk parliament as a member of the liberal party. He is especially fitted for his present prominent position by his extended foreign relations, especially in England.

The present outlook of the country is favorable owing to the interest which Austria takes in its independence, and it is to be hoped that the Albanians will establish order among themselves better than could be done by any foreign conquerors. The men now in the lead are foreign trained and understand the blessings of civilization while the common people who resent the encroachments of foreign authority would probably be willing to tolerate order that would be established by men of their own blood.